



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.2413 | FAX (517) 373.5144

[www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/allen/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/allen/)

For Immediate Release  
December 29, 2005

Contact: Jamie Callahan  
1-866-525-5637

## **Sen. Allen's Mackinac Bridge legislation signed into law**

**LANSING** – Legislation designed by Republicans in the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives will help ensure the future of the Mackinac Bridge and the authority that governs it, now that it has finally been signed into law.

Sponsored by state Sen. Jason Allen and Reps. Tom Casperson and Kevin Elsenheimer, Public Acts 329 through 332 were signed into law Wednesday.

“The governor has finally signed legislation that will protect the Mackinac Bridge from a Lansing power-grab,” said Allen, R-Traverse City. “This whole mess started when the Granholm administration tried to take power away from the Mackinac Bridge Authority. Working along with my Republican colleagues in the House of Representatives we have restored power to the Authority and will make sure it remains that way.”

The legislation mirrors an agreement signed by the governor, Michigan Department of Transportation Director Gloria Jeff and Mackinac Bridge Authority Chair William H. Gnodtke. Under the agreement, the MDOT director will defer to the judgment of the Mackinac Bridge Authority on all matters related to the traditional powers, duties, and functions of the MBA.

The new laws will:

- Repeal the section of law that stipulates that the MBA will revert to Michigan Department of Transportation control once the bridge debt is paid, allowing the authority to retain control of decision making in perpetuity;
- Clearly outline the specific functions which the MBA is responsible for outside of MDOT's jurisdiction; and
- Clarify how the finances of the bridge will be handled, insuring that bridge revenue and earnings will be only used for Mackinac Bridge and not diverted for other purposes.

(More)

Although the agreement between the authority and the administration fully restores power to the authority, the agreement needs to become statute to prevent possible future takeover attempts.

At a town hall meeting hosted by Allen, Casperson and Elsenheimer earlier this fall, Jeff's decision to take away the decades-long responsibilities of the authority based on her interpretation of attorney general opinions from the 1960s was subject to harsh criticism from northern Michigan residents. This shift of power and subsequent outcry led to the recent agreement.

###